

CHANNEL CHATTER

Published each April - August - December

Austravel SafetyNet Inc.



The HF Radio Communications Network for ... Remote Area Travelling by Land or Sea

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- The future of digital voice
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-and much more!



DISCLAIMER

The opinions and information contained within this newsletter are provided in good faith and whilst Austravel SafetyNet Inc. has taken all care in the preparation of the material provided, Austravel SafetyNet Inc. does not accept legal liability or responsibility related to articles placed by its members.

NEWS & INFORMATION

APRIL 2021 EDITION

FOR AUSTRAVEL MEMBERS

Austravel SafetyNet Inc. Committee

Kim Rhodes	President	7880
Peter Schrader	Vice President	2513
Secretary	Rick Shea	3097
Treasurer	Janette Parkin	0116
Membership	Geoff Peck	0951
Committee 1	Bob Carne	1750
Committee 2	Roy Watkins	6001

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Channel Chatter Editor	Geoff Peck	0951	Social Media	Pim Cahill	7215
Sked Coordinator (east)	Ken Fischer	9618	IT Support	Andrew Griffin	4053
Sked Coordinator (west)	Terry Clinch	1928	IT Support	Peter Schrader	2513

A Message from the PRESIDENT

Another new year and we are all looking forward to a better one than the last, I am sure of that, but I think there is still a road to travel before we find the new normal. Physical distancing and the need to keep up better germ/virus management hand cleaning techniques will be with us for a while yet. But with that in mind I believe Austravel will be able to hold more social events as we head toward the new normal.

We have experienced some problems with the environment and our equipment for Kununurra and Mareeba bases over the Christmas period. Both bases have lightning protection systems but lightning has a mind of its own. We believe near lightning strikes may have caused the problems. Locals living around the Mareeba Base site have told us that "the" storm that damaged our Mareeba Base (4199) equipment (not the radio shack) was the worst storm they have seen in 50 years; with Ergon having teams out repairing the electricity grid until 3am the following day, which included a pole mounted transformer within the town.

Sadly the destruction occurred at a time of year when it is difficult to get supply of new equipment but fortunately not when travelers are active in the top end. We have been building our spares numbers progressively in line with budget availability. If you would like more technical information relating to the base repairs you are welcome to contact me directly.

I am happy to report that we got both Kununurra and Mareeba both back on line in January.

Changing the subject.....as with all clubs we have some members who have not renewed their membership this year. Some people just can't travel any more and will no doubt end up selling their radio. However, some may not intend to be travelling for a while and perhaps feel it is not worth renewing their license until that time to save a few dollars.



I would like to point out that Austravel membership fees are kept very low as we are managed and operated by volunteers. We have our basic costs of ACMA licensing, insurance and maintenance to deal with, which are significant and on going.

These costs are there regardless of membership numbers and the burden of the costs is shared by all members all of the time. Its a bit like paying insurance to have a HF radio network in place for the time you need to go and travel. If we only charged for your travel time or an emergency call it would be like you asking to pay an insurance company only when you had an accident, if that were the case it would be very expensive to be a member.

So I urge all members to be comfortable with paying a small amount each year to enable the network to exist for all members, even if you are not travelling at the moment. The cost to our members equates to less than \$2.00 per week (less than a cup of coffee) to help others

have a network until you also come on air. Don't forget, you are always welcome to "log on" to sked sessions from your driveway at home. Calling into skeds provides opportunities to keep your HF radio operator skills up to date.

If you are suffering extreme hardship please contact the secretary as in some cases it may be possible to retain your selcall number as a social

member. You may like to stay a social member even if you have finished with travel. If you have forgotten to renew or perhaps you haven't seen the renewal for some reason please catch up with the membership officer Geoff Peck. You should have paid an Austravel renewal since last November 2020 which is when the emails went out and remember its mutually beneficial to all members when you renew.

Kim Rhodes 0427983329

President@austravelsafetynet.org.au



What is Austravel's "Pathways" ?

The majority of Austravel members will never see or hear about Pathways, but may indirectly benefit from its use, **So what is Pathways ?**

Pathways is a digital resource built by Austravel and used by Austravel H.E.L.P. (4357) responders as a storehouse of information (or database) whereby the flick and click of a mouse key, valuable information may be revealed.

Example (hypothetical)

You need mechanical repairs or fuel along the Canning stock route and you wish to find out if the Kunawarratj Community at well



33 can assist! Pathways have the contact details for the Kunawarratj Community, we can potentially call ahead and ask on your behalf.

Example (hypothetical)

You are travelling to Birdsville, and come across a vehicle on its side, damaged somewhat, but nobody around. You can't be sure if this is a medical "red button" emergency or not is it an old situation and are the police aware?

Once you have checked the scene, call it in via the **Red Button**. Pathways contains all the phone directories for all state police stations (including the Birdsville police) and police link. An Austravel H.E.L.P. (4357) responder can potentially call any police station especially rural and remote area police and review the situation and receive feed back.

An Austravel responder can potentially connect you to the police via 3-way conference call, if the police see a benefit in speaking with you directly as the person at the scene.

NATO Phonetic Alphabet

When speaking on the radio, it is sometimes useful to spell a word using English phonetic spelling. It is very easy to learn English phonetic spelling.

Start by spelling your name, then your company or address. Soon, you will know the whole alphabet. It also helps to remember that there are several groups of words that go together : -

- **Dances:** Foxtrot, Tango
- **Shakespeare:** Romeo & Juliett
- **Men's first names:** Charlie, Mike, Oscar, Victor
- **Cities:** Lima, Quebec

A for Alfa [or Alpha]

B for Bravo

C for Charlie

D for Delta

E for Echo

F for Foxtrot

G for Golf

H for Hotel

I for India

J for Juliet

K for Kilo

L for Lima

N for November

O for Oscar

P for Papa

Q for Quebec

R for Romeo

S for Sierra

T for Tango

U for Uniform

V for Victor

W for Whiskey

X for X-ray

Y for Yankee



[listen](#)



Internet short cut....hold "CTRL" and mouse over to listen



HF Radio Antenna Parts and Supplies

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| • Cable & Connectors | Contact: Mark Rawlings |
| • Mobile | Austravel Member : |
| • Wire Antennas | Selcall 6622 |
| • Feed Systems & Baluns | Lot 25 Brand Hwy. Dongara |
| • Parts | W.A. |
| • CB Antennas | Ph: 0455 463 452 |
| | E: mar@tetemtron.com.au |

GPS Update

Message to all Members

Many members have spotted themselves on the map when travelling using HF radio or their phone. However, they may have not marked a position since they last travelled and some of the GPS positions are very old on the map (see below). Some have been in the desert for years. Having current positions allows Emergency responders to call you as a possible helper if you are nearby an emergency caller. There are about 250 dots on the map now.

Please feel free to mark as many positions as you like, either with your HF radio or using the “Record Phone GPS” selection in the main menu on your Out-n-About app. If you could mark a position every now and then, even if you are just back at home as this will de-clutter the map in remote areas, where an emergency is most likely to come from.

My wife and I use map marking in Out-n-About to meet at cafés or find each other in the city centers'. You can jump from Out-n-About to google maps and get directions very easily.



Digital voice is available as an option on the newer HF transceivers.

Although quite expensive to take up there are already a number of Codan and Barrett transceivers in Australia that can use this mode of transmission.

To allow legal usage of this new mode for the Australian radios that have DV fitted and to separate digital users from interfering with other club members we are “crystal ball gazing” into the future and planning to introduce a new Channel 9 frequency. This future Channel 9 will be for priority digital usage.



The frequency in the 4.8XX Mhz will propagate very similar to our existing channels 2 and 3 and will be ideal for mobile to mobile communication using digital.

Only HF radios in Austravel with digital need to have this new channel fitted. Older radios do not need to be re-programmed.

The future new channel 9 will be in one of the bases but will not be digital to the base as yet. Sadly at the moment Codan and Barrett radios will not talk to each other in DV mode.

When this is resolved we will re-visit this. Digital Voice does offer some clarity and privacy but also has some operational drawbacks. We will do a review on this at a later stage.





Walk-2-GPS this app could....

Save Your Life!

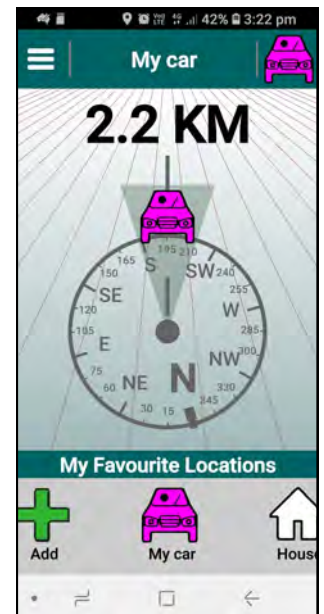
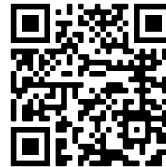
- Loading this simple to use app on your phone may truly save your life, by giving you easy guidance back to a known location, (i.e. your car) using your mobile phone.
- Find your car in a shopping centre car park. Find your way back to camp. (young or old can use this app.)
- This app operates regardless of mobile phone network coverage. (i.e.. In any remote area of the world.)

Application:

- Mark your location as you park your car.
Go for a walk and get lost. Keep your location icon in the big triangle and walk back to the car.

Features:

- Store and name locations with 3 clicks.
- Save many locations for re-use later.
- Show /display actual GPS coordinate information.
- Import/Export locations via clipboard with other applications.



RULE OF THUMB

Try and get very clear of power lines and powered man made structures to achieve best receive on your HF radio. Continuing on with the rules of thumb we have the next topic from Kim Rhodes (7880).

ROT #4. (If you can see a power line from where you are sitting with your HF radio, it is probably interfering with your ability to receive signals)

Explanation:-

Power lines now carry much more than the 50Hz power of day to day usage. Most power lines also have other information modulated in various formats onto the same wires. This information is for control of devices, monitoring and in some cases communication over the power lines. All is generally OK with only low levels of signal leakage from perfect lines, that is until a spark occurs at an insulator. The spark, (a multi frequency transmitter in its own right) additionally generates harmonics of 50 Hz being the power frequency) multiplying all the way up to the top of the HF radio spectrum at 30 Mhz. (i.e. harmonics across all our HF channels.) It's a form of the original spark gap transmitter thousands of times over and across the nation, where every second insulator on power poles is arcing at some time or other.

However, to worsen the noise, this arc now becomes modulated with the many carrier frequencies also on the power lines, so the combined radiated noise is a mix of 50 Hz power and many multiples of sub-carriers all now mangled together and radiating into the air.

As a non technical analogy as to why this noise affects our HF receivers, think of the night sky and how many stars can be seen when out in the bush. This is because even the weakest lights of stars are visible in these dark (i.e. quiet) conditions. Now come to the city and look at the same sky at night and only the brightest stars are visible. The weak stars are still there but swamped by the light pollution in the city. The light pollution is similar to raising the background noise as power lines do.

So back to the bad power lines, if we are sitting in line of sight of a power line, the radiated local noise will most likely be affecting or drowning our HF receiver as the noise level may be far above, in many case the signal we are trying to receive. Newer radios have a dBuV indication signal indicator which ideally should read 0dBuV when nobody is talking. Any level showing all the time is background noise and in the city can be as high as 30 to 50dBuV. This noise is above or louder than a normal signal from a base. In the bush, readable speech could be a signal as low as -20 dBuV well below the zero. All a good reason to go bush really.

As a matter of interest if I made a spark transmitter, connected it to a long wire in my yard and let it interfere with commercial broadcast radios, HF mobile and fixed stations, TVs etc. , as an individual, I would be in a lot of trouble with ACMA.



ADVANCED MOBILE LOCATION...every second counts

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES NEW TECHNOLOGY FOR TRIPLE ZERO

Article by Geoff Peck (0951)
Internet Sourced Information
[Google triple zero aml for detailed information]

On 16 December 2020, The Australian Government announced the commencement of Advanced Mobile Location (AML) technology for the Triple Zero Emergency Call Service.

AML is a technology built into the operating system of Apple and Android telephones which will provide greater location accuracy to Triple Zero during an emergency call from a mobile telephone. It has the potential to save lives and improve outcomes for mobile callers in Australia, as it is doing in the countries in which it has already been deployed.

How AML works

- An AML enabled smartphone recognises when an emergency call is made to 000 and 112 and if not already activated, activates the telephones location service functions
- The smart phone assesses the location information available, using device based hybrid methods, which combine GPS, Wi-Fi, mobile network information and other sensor inputs to calculate the caller's location.
- Once the devices location is calculated, the smart phone automatically sends an SMS with the estimated location to the 000 Emergency Call Service. This SMS is sent in the background while the caller speaks with the Emergency Call Service Organisation, and the caller is not required to do anything to enable the location information to be sent
- if the telephone's location services were switched off at the time the call was initiated, AML will temporarily activate the location service for the duration of the emergency call.
- It typically takes 25 seconds or less for the caller's location to be calculated and sent to 000.
- When the emergency call has finished AML will be deactivated
- The telephone will not retain a record of the SMS sent, and a caller is not able to retrieve it.
- AML works with Android telephones (version 4.1 and

higher, With Google play services installed).

- AML works with iPhones running iOS 14.3 or later an Apple Watch GPS+ Cellular device is running watch OS 7.2 or later.
- AML is not an app- rather it is a technology built into the operating system.

With around 78% of calls to Triple Zero originating from a mobile telephone, AML has the potential to assist a significant proportion of callers requiring emergency assistance. It is capable of providing a caller's location within a 5 metre radius outdoors and 25 metre radius indoors. Based on deployment of AML in other countries, most calls (about 85%) will provide location accuracy within 50 metres.



The AML service is a key collaboration between the Commonwealth Government, Telstra (as the emergency call person for 000 and 112), emergency service organisations in every state and territory (police, fire and ambulance), mobile carriers (Telstra Optus and TPG Telecom) and mobile operating system providers (Google for Android and Apple for iOS and watch OS devices).

Advanced Mobile Location (AML) technology is now being deployed for the Australian Triple Zero Emergency Call

Service.

EDITORS NOTE:

At Austravel SafetyNet Inc. we have been preaching the virtues of HF radio generated GPS location technology as it relates to travel information for our family members and friends who use the Out-n-About app, and including Austravels' H.E.L.P. (4357) emergency call system.

In relation to triple zero calls for ambulance, fire and police emergency situations, our federal government has also seen the obvious benefits of GPS location data by investing heavily in improving the Triple Zero emergency call system.

It may be comforting to our membership to know that Austravel is ahead of this technology curve ... we have a similar HF radio GPS location system to that of Triple Zero, so there is a degree of uniformity between Triple Zero and Austravel as it relates to the importance of GPS logging in emergency situations.

Introducing Roustabouts RV Club Inc.

Introducing Roustabouts RV Club to our widely spread Austravel SafetyNet members.

There is a connection between Roustabouts and Austravel by way of our very similar ideals of travelling Australia widely including those rural and remote areas where communicating with friends, family,

roadside assist agencies and emergency medical services becomes important.

Of course travelling with a group of likeminded people provides a level of assurance and camaraderie.

A feature of the trips organised by the Roustabouts RV Club is the detailed planning of where and when you are going and costs for any camping, meals at pubs and restaurants etc. when you get there. Your daily destinations are noted including GPS coordinates - and you are encouraged to make your own way to each venue without bunching up nose-to-tail convoy style.

Announcing reciprocal agreements for Austravel SafetyNet and Roustabout members.


Both Roustabout and Austravel committees have agreed to share their various attributes with each other. What that means is both clubs can take advantage of each others knowledge and experience in their relevant vocation benefiting their respective members.

In relation to the Roustabouts RV Club - Austravel SafetyNet members would be afforded:-

- Attendance rights at coffee, dining events, tours etc.
- Attendance at musters without restriction
- Attendance on our long paddock drives and mystery tagalongs if
 - unfilled by Roustabout members
 - spots are allocated specifically for Austravel members
- Sharing the Roustabout's magazine

In relation to Austravel SafetyNet - Roustabouts RV Club members would be afforded:-

- Attendance rights at Austravel musters.
- Advice on HF radio and Austravel's Out-n-About integrated app.
- 12 months trial membership in Austravel's HF radio network for novice and experienced HF radio users.
- HF radio support advice, orientation and training
- Sharing Austravel's Channel Chatter magazine.



Roustabouts RV Club Inc

Do you love to get away within south east Queensland and northern NSW on weekends? Do you dream of getting away on a longer trip to places within Australia? Do you like travelling our country in security and in the company of like-minded people? Do you enjoy caravanning and mixing with good friends at Club social events? Yes?

Then the Roustabouts RV and Caravan Club is for you.

This RV & Caravan Club is for young families, working, retired people who own a caravan, motor home, camper trailer, 5th wheeler, camper van or slide on campers who wish to be part of an active RV and caravan club. Our membership is primarily South East Queensland but extends along the Australian eastern seaboard from Cairns to Hobart.

Want further Information?: Our website <https://roustaboutsvrclub.com.au/>

Want to Join?: [Membership Info & Form](#)

Contact: Secretary 0412 614 260



SKED OPERATORS WANTED

What Is an Austravel Sked?

A 'Sked' (Scheduled Net) is a regularly scheduled communications session operated by Austravel members for Austravel members.

Primary Function:-

- Stay in touch daily while travelling and log your position.
- Convey messages received from family, friends and various agencies dealing with road and weather alerts.
- Emergency voice contact point for all members
 - * an extension to H.E.L.P. (4357)
- Radio check - frequently test your radio and antenna systems
- Broaden HF radio skills and knowledge

Who Operates Austravel SafetyNet Skeds?

Any Austravel members including social members can operate a sked. There is a lot of fun and satisfaction operating a sked, but on the odd occasion can be challenging.

If I Volunteer, What Do I Have To Do?

Training is available for volunteer sked operators. Experience in the use of a HF radio is an advantage, but we have successfully trained a social member who didn't have a HF radio, and still doesn't.

After training, it is up to the sked volunteer to nominate when and how often they are available to conduct skeds. The sked coordinator provides a sked roster with most volunteers dedicated to a five day week, some just weekends, some just wish to be on stand by to fill in for other volunteers.

Does Where I Live Matter?

Where you conduct a morning and afternoon sked session is entirely up to the volunteer. Skeds by phone interconnect via a base station can be completed from any reliable mobile phone coverage area or WiFi access point. Volunteers can be a resident of W.A. and conduct an East Australia sked and vice versa.

What equipment do I need?

1. A mobile phone with earbuds or over the ear blue tooth headset
2. An Apple Mac or Microsoft Windows computer or tablet
3. Internet access

Are there Costs Involved?

All of our sked operators use their own mobile phone, computer and internet accounts to operate skeds. Sked operators report that conducting skeds by phone does not financially burden their phone/internet plans.



DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE ?

Technically speaking, operating a sked via the world wide web can be accomplished anywhere there is internet access.

The Austravel sked operator could be in China, USA or in the UK... or it could be someone living in Australia who is house bound for one reason or another and looking for something worthwhile and rewarding to do.

Our current sked volunteers represent a diverse range of experiences and capacities. Some are long term operators, others new to the role. We particularly encourage our female members to consider becoming sked operators.

As an inclusive not-for-profit club, Austravel SafetyNet would welcome an opportunity to change someone's life, by sharing our HF network experiences with those who are looking for interaction with our travelling members, and doing something positive

For more information:-

East Sked Coordinator
Ken Fischer (9618)
Phone:-0439 749 449

West Sked Coordinator
Terry Clinch
Phone: 0414 532 070

CODAN ENVOY

TIPS AND TRICKS



Colin Ingham (6355) has found the knack of loading the Austravel SafeNet logo onto a Codan Envoy.

It looks pretty good, if you want similar for your Envoy, talk to Colin in WA.



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Check their webpage, delivery Australia

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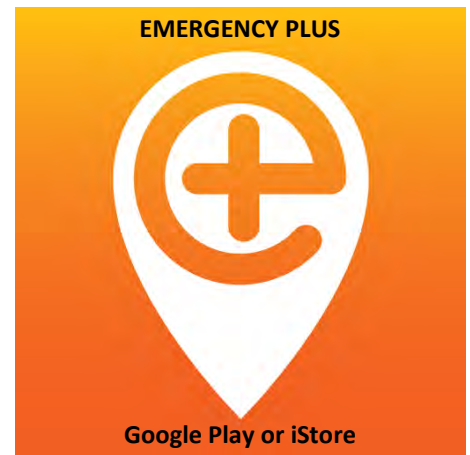
Save the app that could save your life....

never leave home without it >>>>>

Article by Geoff Peck (0951)

Internet Sourced Information

[Google "emergency plus" for detailed information]



This April edition of Channel Chatter, comes at a time when our members are already travelling (Covid style) or planning their trip for 2021. Consider this item as part of your trip planning.

I have as a committee member and H.E.L.P.(4357) emergency responder, promoted the use of this "Emergency Plus" app. before. Its been recently updated, so it's a good time to review it again. There is a connection with this article and another article about AML (Advanced Mobile Location) technology on page 6.

This app has no direct link with Austravel or Austravel's H.E.L.P.(4357) emergency call system. What the app does represent though, is the go to tool for summoning emergency assistance whilst travelling in mobile phone coverage areas.

The app is free.

The travelling scenario is the same for all of our membership, yes we have H.E.L.P. (4357) as a HF radio access point to attaining emergency assistance in remote areas of Australia, but members travelling within mobile phone coverage are more likely to use their mobile phones in an emergency than a HF radio (that's logical).

If your mobile phone has no coverage for the telco you use, in that part of Australia, there maybe another telco provider, where you can dial 112, instead of 000.

Here's the thing.....once you leave home, you are very likely to be in unfamiliar surrounds, not really knowing local landmarks and roads. Then suddenly you are in a situation requiring emergency assistance.

Traditionally, you dial triple zero, the triple zero Telstra operator asks which state your are in and what emergency service you need (ambulance , fire, police).

Once connected to the state based emergency service, the first thing they will ask is **what is your location?**

Scenario #1

You are in mobile phone coverage and you dialled 000 or 112 from your mobile phone and your GPS location is already

known by the operator via the "Advanced Mobile Location" (AML) system. (see page 6)

Scenario #2

You have the smartphone "Emergency Plus" app and you follow the written instructions, but as importantly, you should be able to see the GPS coordinates and note the address shown within the app. Again Advanced Mobile Location (AML) technology has provided your location details automatically to the triple zero operator.

Scenario #3

Your not in mobile phone range, you push the HF radio red button or selcall 4357 to activate the Austravel H.E.L.P. (4357) emergency call system. If you have a HF radio connected GPS receiver, your GPS coordinates are automatically sent via SMS, to a range of H.E.L.P.(4357) responders with your red button call. (similar to AML technology)

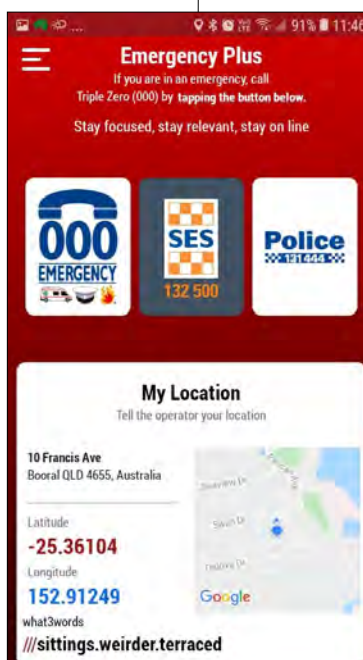
An Austravel H.E.L.P. responder will pass on those coordinates to the triple zero operator on your behalf.

However, if you do not have a HF radio connected GPS receiver you can still use the Emergency Plus smartphone app to see your GPS coordinates. Therefore you can provide accurate location data by voice over the HF radio to the Austravel H.E.L.P.(4357) responder.

Here's a tip:

While travelling in remote areas, out of mobile phone coverage, leave your mobile phone switched on. The "Emergency Plus" app does not need phone coverage for the GPS coordinate to be accurately displayed - but a smartphone will take several minutes for the GPS satellite's to be found and provide accurate GPS data when first switched on.

You may have access to other GPS devices within your vehicle, it matters little which device you use, as long as the data is readily available and accurate. Practice where you can find reliable GPS data in your vehicle.



IS YOUR RV BBQ LEGAL?

There is a lot of misinformation and rumours going on in the recreational vehicle industry relating to correct fitment of barbecues and bayonet fittings.

An industry report that stated: ***at an interstate show a regulator identified the issue of BBQ's in particular the Weber BBQ not having a flame safeguard system. AS/NZS 5601.2 Gas Installations - LP Gas installations in caravans and boats for non-propulsive purposes clause 6.3 states "all appliances shall be fitted with flame safeguard systems to all burners."***

Following mixed views the regulators have confirmed that:

When a BBQ is connected to a bayonet or fixed installation it is deemed to be a part of the installation and must have flame safeguard.

If the BBQ is fixed to a caravan or on a product such as a slide out, the BBQ is deemed to be a part of the installation and must have flame safeguard.

Having a gas bayonet is legal if fitted by a licensed gas fitter. Appliances with flame safeguards can legally be run from that bayonet fitting. In the case of some popular barbecues on the market they do not, so legally they cannot be used off the bayonet fitting.

The report continues on:

- ***The solution is to have a BBQ that has flame safeguard***
- ***or to not fix the BBQ to the RV or a product such as a slide out or external wall bracket***
- ***supply loose connect via a gas bottle directly e.g. the gas bottle sitting on the ground and have labels to ensure the gas bottle does not get fitted into compartments where BBQ is.***

It's also important to understand that ANY barbecue that is modified from the way it's sold means it requires re-certification to be legal.

The report also states that:

- ***Please be aware that domestic BBQs do not require a flame failure device***
- ***however if these domestic BBQ's are installed into a RV they are required to have flame failure with the above requirements.***

Each gas appliance in a RV must have a shut off device accessible in case of an appliance leak. The RV-mounted appliances also require a flame safeguard system, which is a Thermocouple system that stops the flow of gas if the flame goes out for any reason preventing the chance of a gas fire.

None of this is new, however it is attracting a lot of attention at the moment. Please be aware of the ramifications of the enforcement of this rule are and comply accordingly as it may save a life. It also means the responsibility falls on the user to ensure that any products fixed to the caravan bayonet are compliant.

(This article derived from various internet sources)



Cape Leveque Road Upgrade

They once treacherous Cape Leveque road in WA has been transformed into a fully sealed road, with a \$65,000,000 upgrade concluded recently.

The 90 kilometre stretch of road between Broome and the Dampier Peninsula has long been regarded as one of the most difficult drives in the Kimberley region, prone to flooding during the wet and a rough drive during the drive.

- Work began on sealing the Cape Leveque road in 2018 and provided 290 jobs
- The new road will allow residents to travel during wet season and for more tourists to visit the area
- A management plan to keep the Dampier Peninsula safe and protected from inappropriate use is being developed.





Places To Visit

Marree Hotel, South Australia

The town of Marree was surveyed in October 1883 and proclaimed a town on 20th October the same year. The railway reached Marree in 1884 and the town became an important railhead. The Great Northern Hotel was built about the same time. Originally described as 'a substantial stone two-storey building, eighty-three feet by forty-six feet in area. The bar room nineteen feet by twenty- two feet, larger than the dining room of seventeen feet. Upstairs were 14 bedrooms and bathroom, also an annexe with eight extra bedrooms, each having one or more air-brick openings to draw the heated air. There was a large billiard room and balcony. At the back of the hotel there were stone stables comprising eight stalls and loosebox and an underground tank of 20,000 gallons.'

John Charles Luscombe, a well-known northern identity who at one time was the lessee of the Standpipe Hotel in Port Augusta, had the first lease taken out on the Hotel. On November 1884 the rooms were described as being "...large, lofty, well furnished with the luxury of a bath to indulged in and a pleasant siesta on the balcony afterward to enjoy the cool evening breeze when it blows."

Indeed in 1885 a report appeared in the South Australian Advertiser newspaper written by a weary traveller whose train had arrived late in Marree.

"I made my way in The Great Northern Hotel, the proprietor of which is Mr C Chapple. This Hotel can only be described as palatial in appearance and comfortable inside. I was told to look for a hotel the size of the York in Rundle Street, Adelaide, but I was fairly startled when I caught the first glimpse of the Great Northern, which does not belie its name. Like monuments in a desert it rears its lofty head high above other buildings, and can be seen by travellers a mile away from the dreary plain. The hotel was crowded when I arrived by a motley collection of men. In the passageway the "superior" lodgers of the house were amusing themselves in various ways."

In April 1890 the mortgagee foreclosed on Petters and Barker and John Armstrong became the owner. Over the years there have been many owners and managers. The building continues to be used as a hotel and is currently leased to Phil and Maz Turner. If you are in the area check out the Outback Mailman room and the Lake Eyre room at the hotel.



Qmac Radio Service

The **Qmac HF90** transceiver is the world's smallest high power HF SSB transceiver. The HF-90 is a commercial grade transceiver, designed for long-range manpack, portable, vehicle and fixed base station applications.

For service support contact Keith Perry

Austravel Member 1701

Email: Vk6qa@iinet.net.au

PH: 0408 092 811 (*be persistent poor mobile coverage area*)



WHAT PART OF THE SOLAR CYCLE ARE WE IN?

In 1843 the phenomena known as the Solar Cycle was discovered by Samuel Schwabe a German astronomer who observed transitions of the Sun from periods of high activity to low activity every 11 years, over a period of nearly 20 years.

Put in simple terms, the Sun is composed of a huge ball of electrically charged hot gas. As this gas moves, it generates a powerful magnetic field. This magnetic field transitions through an 11 year cycle (known as the Solar Cycle) during which the magnetic poles of the Sun are transposed, i.e. the north and south poles change places.

This cycle affects activity on the surface of the Sun, such as sunspots and solar flares. The energy released by these events charges particles in the ionosphere, affecting radio propagation. More solar flares and sunspots occur at the peak of the cycle than at the bottom of the cycle. Typical values are 80-100 sunspots at the cycle peak and 15 or so at the cycle minimum.

When a strong flare occurs, the increased x-ray and extreme ultraviolet radiation produces ionisation in the lower, D (absorption) layer of the ionosphere, disrupting HF radio broadcasts by absorbing rather than reflecting signals.

We are currently at the end of Solar Cycle 24 (calculated as mid 2020), and from this point we can expect an in-

crease in solar activity and changed radio propagation as the maximum useable frequency (MUF) for shortwave communications increases with an increase in solar activity.

At the peak of the Solar Cycle, the higher frequencies of the shortwave spectrum are very good and will cover shorter and long range. Low power stations can be heard over remarkably long distances. Our lower channels at this time will suffer more absorption and generally be reduce in range but will still be useful.

At the bottom of the cycle, the current position, those higher frequency signals will not usually support reflected propagation via the ionosphere. Propagation at lower frequencies will cover longer distances whilst higher frequencies will suffer.

This is one of the reason that Austravel has a wide range of frequencies, not all are needed at the same times but we need to keep them licensed and ready when required.

“...We are currently at the end of the-Solar Cycle”....



Its time to travel!

This newsletter edition comes to most Austravel members in April, meaning its time to either go traveling, or plan to go travelling.

The majority of this edition is aimed at reminding or informing members on subjects that may directly affect them during this travel season. One such subject “How To Contact Me” while travelling in rural and remote areas, needs reviewing often.

If family members wish to contact you urgently; then whether or not your family have and use the Out-n-About app, there is the ever ready system of message delivery the “old fashioned” way....via voice during the morning or afternoon sked’s.

The “How To Contact Me” documents (shown here and the last page of this newsletter) is designed to be copied and filled in where needed, before you leave on your trip. The “How To Contact Me” document and its instructions are designed for all of our members, regardless of the use of the Out-n-About app. For this old fashioned system to operate successfully, travelling members need to log into AM & PM skeds and leave their radios on scan when travelling.



How to Contact Me



Three simple methods to contact a travelling Austravel member who has a HF radio switched on.

Insert your mobile and seicall number for your friends	Seicall

There are three (3) methods of message delivery available to any Austravel member travelling in rural and remote areas, or summer members sailing in coastal waters:-

- 1. Voice Mail**
 - Family and friends can dial Austravel's 24/7 office number - 07 2161 3457 and leave a voice mail message for the Austravel member to be passed on via seicall contact, or morning and afternoon scheduled net.
 - Ensure the message contains the name and seicall number of the targeted travelling member. Please write it in the box above.
- 2. Call a specialist Austravel member for assistance.**
 - Family and friends can call one of the listed Austravel members (in the list below) and detail their needs person-to-person. The specialist Austravel member will attempt to contact and pass on your message as requested.

Seicall	Location	Name	Phone
0951	QLD	Geoff Peck	0403 309 030
1750	QLD	Bob Carne	0407 936 289
9616	QLD	Ken Fischer	0439 749 449
7880	WA	Kim Rhodes	0427 983 329
6355	WA	Colin Ingham	0427 097 043

- 3. Out-n-About MAILBOX**
 - Alternatively, family and friends can run the Out-n-About app on their mobile phones or tablets and send messages to your radio as well as monitor your travels. However, Out-n-About MAILBOX direct messages are not infallible so if it is **very urgent** it's advisable to “double up” on message delivery by initially contacting us via method 1 or 2 (or both if you wish).

Travelling members - to make the contact with you as above possible, please note!

For members **travelling with a radio installed GPS**, like Hansel & Gretel, leave an electronic breadcrumb trail by frequently logging your GPS position and/or log in via the morning and afternoon sked. For members **travelling without a radio installed GPS**, log your position daily via either the morning or afternoon sked (or both). This will provide H.E.L.P. (4357) operators with key information from which to assist in track and trace scenarios. For seicall contact from a base - leave your radio on and scanning, particularly while driving.



EASTERN AUSTRALIA AUSTRAVEL MUSTER



Plan Ahead and Join Us!

Announcing the next S.E. Qld. Austravel Muster at Maidenwell Qld. about 200 Km's north west of Brisbane. Open to members and visitors, especially those visitors wishing to learn more about HF radio and / or Austravel's "Telcall+" and "Out-n-About" - new complimentary HF radio technology platforms.

WHEN & WHERE ?
May 27th > 30th 2021

Maidenwell Hotel
18 Maidenwell Bunya Mountain Rd
Maidenwell Qld.

Free camping behind the pub and adjacent showground. No power and fill your water tanks before arrival . There are toilets and \$2 showers (very clean when I last visited) and a dump point within the showgrounds.

WHAT'S ORGANISED?

- Friday night welcome and "complimentary" sausage sizzle
- Saturday 10:30am, gather for morning tea - "chew on a committee members ear" session then general and/or technical question about Austravel ? , take advantage of asking for technical help.....here is the place to ask.
- Saturday 6pm pig on the spit @ \$20/head.
- Entertainment provided by the hotel
- There will be chicken and beef meals for those who do not wish BBQ pork.

CALL GEOFF PECK (0951) 0403 309 020 OR EMAIL membership@austravelsafetynet.org.au TO INDICATE YOUR ATTENDANCE, AS WE NEED TO TELL THE HOTEL HOW MANY MAY BE COMING.



PHANTOM HF RADIO CALL FOR HELP

AUSTRAVEL MEMBER HEARS A PLEA FROM A TRAVELLER *STUCK IN THE MUD*

Article by Geoff Peck (0951)

it's a known fact recognised by experienced Outback travellers that the wet season across the top of Australia occurs every year, with the only unknown each year being how much rain will be dumped and how widespread the flooding be.

So it's surprising when outback travellers try their luck, somehow thinking that they can traverse outback roads without consideration to road conditions which obviously means in wet season terms, plenty of mud and flooded river or creek crossings to deal with.

This is one such story of how travelling in this time of year on outback roads can catch you out, leaving a traveller stranded far away from any assistance if bogged or broken down, or worse, sick or injured.

One of our members Gavin based around Newcastle NSW was taking part in a east Australia morning sked, in the first week of January, when just as he was about to change channel, he heard I call for assistance on Channel 5*"bogged near Bulloo Downs 160 kilometres from (unreadable) please notify the police"*.

The caller offered a selcall number 0174 as his selcall ID. Gavin phoned me and relayed what he had heard and I began the process of validating who this person was, as it seemed strange that a member of Austravel (supposedly) did not use the H.E.L.P.(4357) emergency call system and chose voice calling only.

Several selcall 0174 attempts was made via several Austravel bases up and down the channelsto no avail. I checked in with 0174's "In Case of Emergency" contact, with that outcome confirming that 0174 was expectedly travelling in that area; indicating we had a genuine H.E.L.P.(4357) activation involving 0174 who resides in Brisbane .

I called Ken (9618) who has a good knowledge of the Thargomindah area, and felt he probably knows where 0174



might be. He in turn phoned Thargomindah police and they quickly understood the situation and headed out by road past Bulloo Downs until it became impassable. The police returned to Bulloo Downs station where their station aircraft was used to fly the Bulloo Downs / Tickalara Station road.

They located a vehicle at the Brumby Yards 50 kilometres East of Tickalara Station and the police requested Tickalara station crew to travel to the vehicle, and check out what needed to be done.

The vehicle occupants should know they have been located as the aircraft did a low pass over the bogged vehicle. In the mean time, phone contact was made with Phillip 0174 who was in Roma and had not made an emergency call*Yep the plot thickens, who is out there bogged if not the genuine 0174?*

The Tickalara crew found the driver and his vehicle with a flat tyre and one wheel missing. He had 100 metres of winch rope, but the nearest anchor point was 150 metres away and had a set of recovery trax (unused).

The vehicle was made roadworthy again, by the Tickalara station crew, with the station manager admonishing the driver over his stupid attempt of travelling on a closed road, and he then quickly drove off making his way to the Thargomindah police station the following morning. Did this person have a HF radioyes, and did he use someone else's call sign ..yes he did, was he an Austravel member?We don't think so.

All we know that his name was David from Karratha WA.

MAIDENWELL HOTEL "REVELLERS" SOCIAL CLUB DONATES TO AUSTRAVEL

The Maidenwell Hotel social club (The Maidenwell Revelers) are a philanthropic group who love to socialise at the hotel, but also like to support various not-for-profit organisations that operate within the community at large. At Christmas time each year the "Revellers" donate funds collected via raffles etc. during the year. This year the "Revellers" have decided to support Austravel Safety net Inc. with a \$500 cheque proudly displayed here by Denny Sharpe (1226). Austravel greatly appreciate the support via this donation, with the funds adding to our ability to grow and improve the Austravel SafetyNet HF radio network for its members and other affected remote area travellers.



All things considered, Austravel contributed to his prompt recovery. From an initial voice contact with Gavin to being found by the aircraft was an only about 8 hours.





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Designed and built in Australia for the world's harshest conditions, Barrett HF equipment thrives in the outback and has the track record to Prove it. The Barrett "Outback Traveller Pack" should be considered as standard equipment for anyone travelling in remote areas.

Utilising the "free to air" nature of HF communications, the "Outback Traveller Pack" provides access to essential safety and emergency services with no ongoing call charges.



The Barrett 4050 D handset app supports iOS, Android and Windows devices for wireless voice and radio control.



4050 D

WELCOME TO AUSTRAVEL SAFETYNET Inc.

Mark Andrews	1113	NSW
Donald Vanderlugt	2147	NSW
Don Meyers	0326	NSW
John Kennedy	1310	NSW
Mark Ingram	2949	NSW
Les Oldroyd	8929	NSW
Brian Gill	1186	QLD
Chris Lloyd	1960	QLD
Geoff Smith	4563	QLD
Trevor Lansdown	1097	QLD
Mark Gordon	1426	QLD
Joe Rubio	5759	QLD
Kevin & Margie McDonnell	2405	QLD
David Holland	1125	SA
Darren Hewitt	0777	SA
Rachel Hewitt	7770	SA
Stuart Abbey	1030	SA

David Callera	1921	VIC
David Scott	7658	VIC
Sam Androvitanes	0970	VIC
Roman Skarbek	0019	VIC
Neville King	1497	WA
Cynthia King	1498	WA
Charles Nadin	6565	WA
Brian Rubery	6526	WA
Michael Margot	0182	WA
George Morrissey	1646	WA
Hans Nortier	0496	WA
Andree Marwitz	3010	WA
Peter Massee	0912	WA
Tony Horniman	6307	WA
Glenn Hasson	6969	WA
Shaine Bransbury	7008	WA

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

The \$10 compact “HF Signal Jammer”.

After many months of frustration of not being able to receive anyone on his Codan NGT/3040 , it turns out that this small cigarette lighter USB charger packed a big punch when it came to generating RF noise.



Noisy USB adapter plugged in to 12VC

After tuning the 3040 tuner, and listening to background noise NGT signal strength meter graph was encroaching on the “H” in Hi (See photo A)



Photo A

**HF Noise generated
by modern switch
mode electronic
devices**

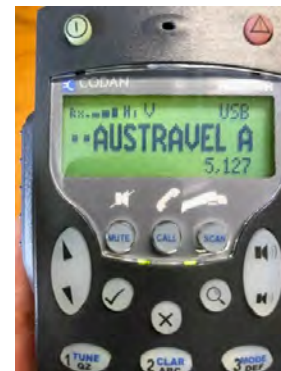


Photo B

After removing noisy USB charger:

Once the USB charger was removed from the cigarette socket, the signal strength of the background Rx noise dropped to what is shown in Photo B. This reduction in the Rx Noise floor was the difference between not being able to hear the Beacon call revertive from Shepparton and getting a 4 out of 5 revertive once the USB adapter was removed – All tests were done out of Brisbane. (article provided by an anonymous Austravel member)

FOLLOW WHAT WE'RE UP TO ON SOCIAL MEDIA

PIM CAHILL (7255) SOCIAL MEDIA OFFICER
Email: socialmedia@austravel.org.au



BUY

SWAP

SELL

AUSTRAVEL MEMBERS MARKET

Want to buy, swap, sell some HF radio equipment?try our newsletter and we will list it for you - no charge!

Contact: Geoff Peck
PH: 0403 309 020



Home Services About

Netwest's Radio and Electronics Repair Centre

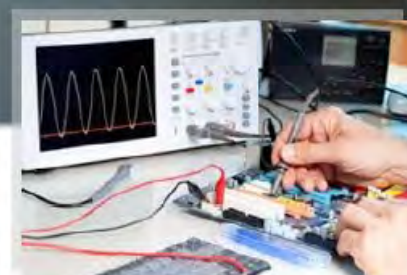
- Transceivers, Auto tuner repairs, Power supplies
Codan antenna repairs
- Commercial electronic devices can be quoted

Services

Contact Bruce Ingham

08 92255522 or 0418 376 541

41 Kensington St
East Perth WA 6004



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6 Park St, Nhill Victoria 0353911466



The discovery of gold in Victoria in the early 1850s led to a vast exodus of men from South Australia leaving farms and businesses without labour. However, the trip was long and expensive. Some travelled by ship at the cost of £2/10/0 while others struggled along the coast road for more than 600 miles to Mt Alexander (Castlemaine).

Henry Wright, Crown Lands Commissioner for the Wimmera, suggested that it should be possible to reach the goldfields by a shorter route of only 360 miles. This information was expanded by the Adelaide Register and followed up by hundreds of South Australians keen to try their hand on the gold fields.

As people left so did their wealth (what little there was of it). Bankers estimated £120,000 was removed from the economy sending at least 100 businesses bankrupt. At the same time men with gold in their pockets could not sell it in Adelaide or use it to purchase goods in the shops.

On 28/1/1852 the Assay Bullion Act was passed in South Australia enabling gold to be purchased at £3/11/0 an ounce. However, this only solved part of the problem. How were miners to get their gold from Mt Alexander to Adelaide? This problem was also exercising the minds of parliamentarians who sent the Deputy Surveyor-General, John McLaren to survey a road from Wellington to Mt Alexander.

About the same time Alexander Tolmer wrote to the Chief Secretary suggesting that he (Tolmer) should lead a party to investigate the practicability of *"establishing a police escort, consisting of an officer and six men, and provided with a proper spring cart or other conveyance, for the purpose of bringing back to this colony the earnings of the South Australian gold-diggers."*

The gold escort route from Adelaide to Mt Alexander is the result of all these various needs and actions.

That's a laugh !



Don't let them take the temperature on your forehead as you enter the supermarket, its a government plot to erase your memory. I went for a bottle of milk and a loaf of bread and came home with a case of beer and 12 bottles of wine!



HF Radio Allied Traders List

Connecting Austravel Members To HF Radio Sales / Service Providers'



Watts Communications	Codan, Barrett, Icom, Bushcomm Antennas www.wattscom.com.au / sales@wattscom.com.au	Fyshwick ACT 02 6280 6416
Wes Follett	Codan, Barrett, Icom, Bushcomm Antennas wfollett@bigpond.com / 0412 885 817	Deniliquin 03 5881 3189
Eacom Communications	Codan www.eacom.com.au / ian.blackburn@eacom.com.au	Griffiths NSW 02 6964 2033
Fettell Communications	Barrett www.fettell.com.au	Port Macquarie NSW 02 658 11341
Action Communications	Icom www.actioncommunications.net.au	Kingswood NSW 1800 802 948
Karera Communications	Icom www.karera.com / sales@karera.com	Tuggerah NSW 02 4355 1599
Phoenix HF Communications	Servicing most brands of HF	Kareela NSW 02 9544 6355
Independent Communications	Servicing most brands of HF radios www.independentcommunications.com.au	Tamworth NSW 02 6765 7555
Illawarra Communications	Codan www.illcom.com.au / scott@illcom.com.au	Wollongong NSW 02 4229 7300
Central Communications	Codan, Barrett www.centralcomms.com.au / sales @centralcomms.com.au	Alice Springs NT 08 8952 2388
Comspec (NT) P/L	Codan, Barrett www.comspec.com.au / sales@comspec.com.au	Alice Springs NT 08 8953 1903
Combined Comms Solutions	Barrett www.combinedcom.com.au / info@combinedcom.com.au	Darwin NT 08 8941 0644
ITS Communications	Codan, also servicing most brands of HF radios info @itscomm.com.au	Winnellie NT 08 8984 4855
Multi Voltage Maintenance	Codan, Barrett, Scout All HF radios catered for, older units channelized (Andrew Sutherland)	Yeppoon Qld. 0418 814 978
hfradiosales.com On-Line Store	Codan, Barrett Sales Service (incl. Qmac) and spare parts. www.hfradio.com.au / email: sales@hfradio.com.au	Brisbane Qld. 0408 345 208
Mobile Communications	Codan, Icom www.mobilecomms.com.au	Brisbane Qld. 07 3373 2345
RF Technologies	Servicing most brands of HF radios www.rftech.com.au / maxr@rftech.com.au	Brisbane Qld. 07 3279 7177
Kyle Communications	Codan, Barrett, Icom www.kyle.com.au / kylecomms@specsafe.com.au	Burpengary Qld. 07 3888 7899
Miles Electronics	Codan, Barrett www.mileselectronics.com.au / john@mileselect.com.au	Cairns Qld. 07 4035 1133
Reids Radiodata	Codan reidsradiodata@bigpond.com	Cowra NSW 02 6341 1544

HF Radio Allied Traders List

Connecting Austravel Members To HF Radio Sales / Service Providers'



Aust. Professional Electronics & Repairs	Repairs for a wide range of electronic equipment including HF radios Email: info@apear.com.au	Redlynch (Cairns) 0408 764 540
Linemaster Marine Electronics	Barrett www.linemaster.com.au / sales@linemaster.com.au	Maroochydore Qld. 07 5479 6851
TCQ Communications	Codan, Barrett accounts@tcq.net.au	Mount Isa Qld. 07 4743 4388
Capricorn Communications	Codan, Icom www.capcom.com.au / sales@capcom.com.au	Nth. Rockhampton Qld. 07 4926 1172
Beaney's Communications	Barrett, Icom www.beaneys.com.au	Rockhampton 07 4927 5049
Advance Communications	Codan, & Barrett (www.advancecomms.com.au) E: peter.wrensted@advancecomms.com.au (mobile 0418 987 356)	Roma 07 4592 1111
Navcom Electronics P/L	Barrett navcomadmin@bigpond.com	Townsville Qld. 07 4771 2422
Norcomm P/L	Codan, + servicing of most brands of HF radios www.norcomm.com.au / sales@norcomm.com.au	Townsville Qld. 0408 722 833
Digital Radio Solutions	Codan, with service to most makes of HF www.marktek.com.au / contact@marktek.com.au	Adelaide S.A. 0418 845 518
Electric Bug	Codan, Icom, Barrett www.electricbug.com.au / sales@electricbug.com.au	Adelaide S.A. 08 8346 9234
International Comms. Systems	Codan, Barrett, Icom, Wagner, Hawk www.intcomsys.com.au / intcomm@intermode.on.net	Port Adelaide S.A. 08 8447 3688
Northern Communications	Service of all brands of HF radios phil.48@bigpond.com	Gawler S.A. 08 8522 6081
HF Radio Solutions	Codan & Codan Auto Tune Repair www.hfradiosolutions.com.au / ivan@hfradiosolutions.com.au	Renmark S.A. 0428 882 719
Weeks Radio Communications	Codan sales@weeksradio.com	Alexandra Vic. 03 5772 1292
Bairnsdale Communications	Codan, Icom sales@bcomms.com.au	Bairnsdale Vic. 03 5152 4622
Lara Electronics	Codan & Codan Auto Tune Repair www.laraelectronics.com.au / sales@laraelectronics.com.au	Geelong Vic. 0418 599 355
Bushcomm Online Store	Buschcomm Antennas, Multi Tap Antennas, 2nd. Hand HF www.bushcomm-online.com / sales@bushcomm-online.com	Melbourne Vic. 03 9017 6777
Angus Communications	Codan, Barrett hofmann126.ph@gmail.com	Shepparton Vic. 03 5821 9155

HF Radio Allied Traders List

Connecting Austravel Members To HF Radio Sales / Service Providers'



South Eastern Communications	Sales & service of most brands of HF radios. www.secomms.com.au	Rosebud Vic. 0434 720 006
AA Radio Services	Codan, Icom, + service of most brands of HF radios. www.aaradio.com.au / sales@aaradio.com.au	Vermont Vic. 03 9264 8333
Earth 2 Ocean Communications	Barrett, Codan, Icom sales and service www.earth2ocean.com.au / sales@earth2ocean.com.au	Bunbury W.A. 08 9721 1730
Esperance Communications	Barrett, Icom + servicing of most brands of HF radios www.esperancecomms.com.au / service@esperancecomms.com.au	Esperance W.A. 08 9071 3344
Gencomm	Specialist Barrett repairs and service Email: john@gencomm.com.au	Claremont WA 0409 376 006
Allcom Communications	Codan, Icom, GME, Motorola, & Tait, - all brands repaired/serviced www.allcom.com.au / allcom@allcom.com.au	Perth W.A. 08 9479 4997
Barrett Communications	Barrett www.barrettcommunications.com.au / information@barrettcommunications.com.au	Perth W.A. 08 9434 1700
Mobile Masters	Barrett (sales no service) www.mobilemasters.com.au / mail@mobilemasters.com.au	Perth W.A. 08 9492 1777
Transair Two Way Radio	Codan, Icom www.transair.com.au / transair@transair.com.au	Perth W.A. 08 9209 2225
RF Waves Australia	Codan, GME, Motorola HF VHF Repair & Service	Hammersley W.A.

Austravel Safety Net Inc. Members please note.....The purpose of this list of "Allied Traders" is to offer a ready reference which may provide you with a source of sales and/ or service assistance when travelling away or near your home location.

Please provide feed back to the "Channel Chatter" newsletter editor if you find information contained misleading or incorrect.

Allied Traders....please review your listing and advise the "Channel Chatter" newsletter editor of any listing detail that is incorrect or requires review. Additionally, if you wish to be removed from our Allied Trader e-mail contact list, please advise.

(editor contact details contained on page one)



How to Contact Me

Three simple methods to contact a travelling Austravel member who has a HF radio switched on.

Leave your name and selcall number for your friends	Selcall

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